



# Mimulus MEMO

California Native Plant Society  
Kern County Chapter  
Fall 2007

## President's Message

Sometimes I am truly amazed at the range of talent and dedication our chapter encompasses. It is a pleasure working with so many good folks! With the death of our number one volunteer and dear friend, Steve Hampson, many members have stepped in to take on the numerous things Steve did for our group. Brother and sister team, Stephen and Linda Cooley are producing their first issue of the Mimulus Memo, and Stephen will take care of our website for us. Don Turkal and Denis Kearns will be in charge of our plant keying sessions before our meetings. Clyde Golden will update us on membership lists and labels. All we need now is a person to represent us at the Kern Weed Management meetings in Tehachapi, every other month, and a cheerful person to say yes when a call goes out to help run a table for us at public education events. All of us interested in the Field Trips/Wildflower Walks will keep in mind Steve's enthusiasm for the search for and persistence in getting the right name on the right plant, and maintaining those lists that make trips to view our natives such enjoyable learning experiences. Steve was such a gift to our chapter!

The other people who so impress me with their knowledge and dedication to native flora and fauna are our members who are professional consultants. I read 300 plus pages of the K.C. Valley Floor Habitat Conservation Plan, in order to submit a letter to the Planning Department. This plan has been in the making for about 20 years, and every place I read about native plant issues were the names of our members, listed as expert contacts or serving on committees, or as the person who wrote the plans for species recovery. I was wowed! We owe those professionals our gratitude, and an invitation to offer a program on their specialties, don't you think?

Many thanks to all of you! — **Lucy Clark**



**THANK YOU!**

Kern River Preserve Spring Nature Fest Table — Marya Miller, Steve Hampson, Lucy Clark  
Center for Biological Diversity Tejon Ranch Press Conference — Steve Hampson  
CALM Birthday Celebration Table — Lorraine Unger, Steve Hampson, Lucy Clark  
Field Trip Leaders — Everyone who led a trip for us this past spring and summer!

## TURKEY VULTURE FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Audubon's Kern River Preserve has asked us to participate in the Turkey Vulture Festival again this year. We will run an education table from 9am to 4 pm on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 28 and 29. CNPS Kern need several people to hand out brochures on growing natives, to talk to interested folk about joining, and to promote our activities, such as meetings, field trips, and the APES program. Please contact Lucy Clark if you can donate at least a 2 hour shift to helping us get the word out. E-mail [lucyg391@gmail.com](mailto:lucyg391@gmail.com).

## The Kern River Parkway Foundation

The Kern River Parkway Foundation received a \$48,000 grant to plant 650 trees along the Kern River Bike Path accross from CSUB. The Planting day will be Sat Nov 10<sup>th</sup> --8 AM to noon.

The planning meetings for this project started Thurs Aug 30<sup>th</sup> at my house. We are in need of volunteers with organizational skills. We still need to pursue additional funding and organizations to cosponsor this project. This section of the Path is the last hot, dry, non-shady that needs a tree canopy.

Please help to spread the word.

Help.

Rich Oneil

## FALL PROGRAMS/CHAPTER MEETINGS

Everyone is invited to attend membership meetings, the first at CALM, and the second at the Beale Library. Refreshments will be served!

### **Saturday, September 15 Designing California Native Gardens Based on Plant Communities**

**SPEAKER: Alrie Middlebrook**

**PLACE:** CALM, 10500 Alfred Harrell Hwy — 10am in the classroom

We have all seen the beauty of California landscapes in our travels about our state. Now learn how to recreate these beautiful scenes in your own garden with the speaker for our first meeting of the year. Alrie Middlebrook is the founder and owner of Middlebrook Gardens in San Jose, a build/design firm which creates native California gardens based on ecologically appropriate plant species and cutting edge sustainable technology and techniques. She is co-author of Designing California Native Gardens: The Plant Community Approach to Artful, Ecological Gardens with noted field Botanist, Dr. Glenn Keator. Their book represents a revolutionary way of looking at landscaping, using beautiful art, informative text, and stunning photography. The goal is to change the way Californians garden by helping them make the right ecological, aesthetic, economic, and ethical decisions. Forty percent of all power consumed in California is used in pumping water. Planting a native garden reduces water usage by 75%, helping curb power usage and greenhouse gas emissions.

Alrie will explain this approach, and how to design and install beautiful and sustainable California native gardens based on your own local site and its unique characteristics determined by soil, climate, and exposure, a practice that is not only ecologically appropriate but also helps to ensure the success of your garden. We are pleased to have Alrie available to sign her new book, which will be on sale. Refreshments will be served, and the morning will conclude with a tour of CALM to see mature plants in the native gardens. CNPS members may attend free and guests are welcome with a payment of about \$4 to CALM. Come join us and learn!

### **Tuesday, October 16 Bees 101 & Plant Identification**

**SPEAKER: Denis Kearns**

**PLACE:** Beale Memorial Library, 701 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield — 6pm Lake Room, 1<sup>st</sup> floor

#### **6pm Plant Identification Workshop**

Bring a plant you have wondered about, and we will have plants to key also. Bring your Twisselmann-Moe or Jepson, and a loop if you have one. We will try to have extra books, if you need one.

#### **7pm Bees101**

Our CNPS member and BLM Botanist, Denis Kearns PhD, will give us a tutorial illustrated with his photos, on the basics of bees:

Where did bees come from?

Bees versus wasps

Native bees as pollinators

Diversity of bees and “weedy” bees

Bee homes and what honey really is

... ..and what you have been waiting for ... ..

How to tell the differences between male and female bees!

However, there will be no accompanying talk about the birds.

### **Saturday, November 3 Annual Native Plant Sale**

**CSUB! NEW LOCATION! See the article on page 3**

#### **Annual Potluck**

**Look for a post card in your mail for the date, location, and speaker’s topic announcing our annual membership get-together!**

Our Kern County CNPS website can currently be accessed at [www.BakersfieldCactus.org](http://www.BakersfieldCactus.org)

We are approaching fall; a season of change.

This fall is bringing MANY changes in our **Annual Native Plant Sale.**

**Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:00am – 3:00pm**  
**at the Environmental Studies Area on the CSUB campus**

Notice the 2 changes there: November (not October) and CSUB (not CALM).

The BIG need we have this year is for volunteers with a truck or SUV that are willing to go to a nursery and pick up/ deliver the plants. If you have the vehicle & time, we will provide the nursery location, plant list and check! Please contact Debby even if you are just a teensy interested, so she can discuss it with you.

For those of you without said vehicle, we need your help, too.

We need help setting up on Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We need volunteers throughout Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>, sale day. Sign up on the form below.

To reach more and new customers, we are trying a new venue & different plant stock.

This is our only fundraiser, so *YOUR* help is essential to our success. Mark your calendar, save the date, and plan to help.

You can talk with Debby and get more details at our September & October meetings (see other articles contained within this newsletter).

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## Native Plant Sale Volunteer Sign-Up

Name \_\_\_\_\_, email \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone # \_\_\_\_\_, evening phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the time and task you will help with:

**Pre-sale:** set-up and arrange plants on Friday, Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>

<b>Sale Day:</b>	7am – 9am	bring coffee/ doughnuts	last minute details
	9am – 12pm	cashier	sales
	12pm – 3pm	cashier	sales
	3pm – 5pm	clean-up	carry out

Complete and send this form by October 20<sup>th</sup> to Debby Kroeger  
email [decay@att.net](mailto:decay@att.net) with your availability.

**Thanks.**



If you have always wanted to visit a certain area in or out of Kern County (not too far out, of course) then please contact the Wild Flower Walk Chairmen, Don & Vonnice Turkal. If two heads are better than one, think what can be accomplished with 3, 4, or 5 heads.....the possibilities are limitless! Our phone 393-4778 is waiting for your call, or email: [tloveanimals@bak.rr.com](mailto:tloveanimals@bak.rr.com)

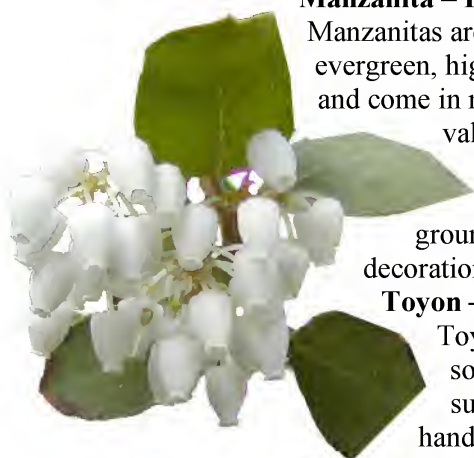


## Heath, Rose, and Sage Families

The Native Plant Sale is just around the corner. Below are a few shrub selections that will be available at the sale and will work very nicely into your existing garden. There may be a limited number, so come early.

### Manzanita – Heath family, Ericaceae

Manzanitas are extremely useful as ornamental plants in the western United States. They are evergreen, highly drought-tolerant, have picturesque bark and attractive flowers and berries, and come in many sizes and growth patterns. Some low-growing manzanitas are extremely valuable evergreen groundcovers for dry slopes. Larger varieties can be grown as individual specimens, and pruned to emphasize the striking pattern and colors of the branches. They prefer light, well-drained soil, although the low-growing ground covers will tolerate heavier soils. Manzanita branches are popular as decoration, due to their unique shape, color, and strength when dried.



### Toyon – Rose family, Rosaceae

Toyon can be grown in domestic gardens in well drained soil, and is cultivated as an ornamental plant. It can survive temperatures as low as -12°C. The bush is handsome all year round and the bright red berries in winter are a special reward (even if the birds devour them all the first day they turn ripe). It survives on little water, making it suitable for Xeriscape gardening, and is less of a fire hazard than some chaparral plants. It is also known by the common names *Christmas berry* and *California holly*.



National Park  
Service staff photo

### Cleveland sage – Sage family, Lamiaceae

Cleveland sage is a semi-evergreen shrub. To increase success, place it in the hottest, driest, fastest-draining site available. It will range from 3-5 feet tall with beautiful violet-blue blossoms that begin to develop in late spring and has a pleasing fragrance that carries on hot summer days. Hummingbirds, butterflies, bees and other insects collect nectar from the flowers.



Submitted by Don & Yvonne Turkal



**We emailed the Jepson revision staff from their website asking when the next edition would be available and they replied with the following:** (If you access the link below you will see the approved changes to date for family and genera)

Hello,  
Thanks for your interest in the Jepson Manual and its revision.

We are making good progress and some TJM2 treatments are already complete:  
<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepsonmanual/review/>

We are on track to send the text and illustrations to the printer by the end of 2008 (revised slightly from the original goal of June 2008). We don't know for sure how long the actual printing will take but the new Manual will likely be available sometime in mid-late 2009.

**I hope that information is helpful.**

— Staci

## PLANT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

If you are interested in learning to key plants or to increase your plant recognition skills, join the informal, relaxed hour we spend identifying local native plants at 6pm, before our evening meetings. Bring a hand lens and a Jepson's Manual or Twissleman-Moe if you have one. Suitable plant material will be provided, or bring a native plant that you are wondering about. Our facilitators this year are Don Turkal and Denis Kearns.

# Different Drummer

## Linda Cooley and John Justeson

**Steven Edward Hampson** (September 14, 1950 – July 5, 2007) was a devoted son, a steadfast friend, a brilliant scholar, and a committed naturalist who was devoted to and took pleasure from protecting the natural world. His friends and acquaintances knew him as gentle soul with a wicked wit and a ready smile – a sweet, unassuming, appreciative and generous participant in the lives of us who were lucky enough to know him.

Of few can it be more aptly said that he followed the beat of a different drummer. Steve was a Renaissance man who conducted cutting-edge research in at least three distinct fields of science: during an active, 30-year career, he made theoretical advances in botany, in artificial intelligence, and in bioinformatics. For most of this time he participated in research in a “think-tank” environment at the Department of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of California at Irvine, working with computer scientists, mathematicians, and molecular biologists who sought and respected his insights for their projects and as a mentor for their graduate students.

Early on, Steve chose to neither marry nor have children. In his college years he told a friend that he didn’t see the appeal of children; they were simply people that didn’t work right yet. But he genuinely liked and engaged with the children of his friends, who accepted and loved him as an uncle. And in spite of refusing to consider marriage – which he made clear from the start to any prospective girl friend – he was a romantic who at his death was involved in a committed, long-term relationship with Linda Cooley.

While he would never start a family of his own, Steve was a devoted son to his father, Ross, and to his mother, Luella. After completing his second PhD, he received the offer of a prestigious and highly-paid position at an East Coast think tank to pursue his own research agenda, with no restriction, in collaboration with 11 other scholars on the forefront of research in machine learning. He turned it down in order to stay within a 3-hour drive of his family; “I owe them everything,” he explained. By pursuing a research career as a participant on grants to his PhD advisor, Dennis Kibler, and other Irvine faculty, he was able to spend every second or third weekend in Bakersfield with his parents. He spent even more time here after the death of his mother, at age 85, in 1995.

In one way or another, Steve was a resident of Bakersfield for almost all of his life. He was born here in 1950, and was raised here except for a few years when his father was doing graduate work in North Carolina. He attended Voorhies Elementary, Sierra Junior High, Foothill High School, and Bakersfield College. When he left to complete his undergraduate and graduate education, he continued to live with his parents for several days a month, and did so throughout his life. He returned to Bakersfield permanently in 2004, living in his boyhood home with his father, while making brief research trips to Irvine about twice a month until his retirement in the summer of 2006.

Steve’s academic career out of town began with his transfer in his junior year to UC Riverside. Because of his love of plants, he pursued an undergraduate major in Botany, and went on to do his PhD in Botany at UC Davis under Prof. Robert Loomis. His 1977 dissertation was a major contribution to the understanding of how plants grow, using a combination of experimental work and computer modelling.

The work with computers set the direction of the rest of his career in research. While still an undergraduate at UC Riverside, Steve had become fascinated with computer programming and with cognitive psychology. Inspired as a child by simple programs that learned to play checkers and would improve their play with experience, he spent years thinking about how to capture organization of intelligence in concrete ways that could be implemented on a computer. His genius was in capturing an overall understanding of a problem and working through the consequences of that understanding in concrete ways. His fascination with the structure of intelligence stayed with him throughout his work in Botany; when that challenge was completed, he embarked on a new career in artificial intelligence and machine learning. As a graduate student at UC Irvine, he was a pioneer in the development of artificial neural networks, culminating in a dissertation on the subject in 1983. For well over a decade, his general-purpose program regularly outperformed special-purpose systems designed to handle particular tasks. Steve developed practical machine learning systems, and published several fundamental papers establishing the properties of these approaches. As a postgraduate researcher he continued to collaborate for another 24 years with his former professors on a series of innovative research projects, including work in bio-informatics on the coding properties of DNA, and was an advisor to many other projects, from an automated system to ease freeway congestion to the design of dictionaries for a project documenting endangered indigenous languages of Mexico. He also applied these talents to more mundane purposes: helping a friend generate knitting patterns, or optimizing seating choice for the Bakersfield Civic Light Opera.

Steve’s interests in the natural world were shared with his father, a respected microbiologist and public health official who for many years headed the lab at the Kern County Health Department. They were nurtured by his mother, who involved him in community organizations involved with natural history. From childhood on, he maintained a greenhouse and cared for a menagerie of animals, including his cats, desert tortoises, and an albino rabbit, Albin. He and his parents went on frequent trips to explore for rocks and see new territory; later in life, he was an avid participant in field trips to discover whatever new wonders the adventure brought.

Steve’s philosophy of living, seemingly, was set in his boyhood, when he confided it to one who would be a lifelong friend: None of us chose to be in this life, in this world. But given that we are here, it is our responsibility to try to do what we can to make the world better for our having lived, and to minimize the harm we do. Steve thoroughly enjoyed living this personal philosophy in his daily life:

frugally, respectfully, with good humor, never shrinking from a perceived responsibility, and ever attending to opportunities to be helpful to those around him.

By his adulthood—with time, and knowledge and experience – Steve had come to understand in depth the fragility of life, and of the web of interconnection among living things. Having had a passion for plants in particular, nurtured by having tended his own greenhouse since his childhood, this became the focus of his efforts to make a positive impact with his life. Especially after retirement from his 30-year career in science, he was actively involved with the preservation of Kern County’s native plants and their habitats.

He was an active member of the California Native Plant Society, participating avidly in whatever chapter was convenient to him. He never shrank from organizing or attending field trips, and was characteristically generous in organizing and maintaining plant lists for all the trips he went on. These lists are a valuable resource for anyone interested in the plants of various regions of California. He was meticulous at “keying out” plants and would spend hours agonizing over a pappus-scale or the type of glands on a calyx. The Kern County Chapter will certainly miss his expertise and encouragement at all of our gatherings.

His interest in native plants was paired with an equal interest in their habitats. He was an enthusiastic volunteer on several local nature preserves—WindWolves, Panorama Vista, and SandRidge, to name a few. He has been instrumental in the revegetation work at Panorama Vista preserve, located on the Kern River just below the Bluffs. He also spent several days each spring volunteering for the Ridgecrest Wildflower Show, collecting, identifying, and displaying their spring flowers.

Steve also contributed to other local natural history organizations. He was active in the Bakersfield Cactus and Succulent Society and was a great help in creating a succulent garden at Cal State, Bakersfield. He supported the Kern Audubon Society, attending meetings and field trips. He had a life-long interest in local geology, beginning as a young member of the Kern Mineralogical Society and, more recently, attending lectures at the Buena Vista Museum.

*time is a tree (this life one leaf)  
but love is the sky and i am for you  
just so long and long enough  
-- e. e. cummings*

Steve chose his time to be just so long; for those whose lives he touched, far too short. He intended to make its positive impact permanent, according to friends, by bequeathing a major portion of his assets to The Nature Conservancy.

CNPS – Kern County Chapter

Stephen Cooley, Editor

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The mission of the California Native Plant Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California’s native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through science, education, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship.